

SOME RECENT RECORDS OF UNCOMMON DIPTERA IN
SOUTH HERTFORDSHIRE

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From 1985 to 1987 a casual survey of certain Diptera families was undertaken in the Watford area of South Hertfordshire. Details of part of this survey, along with lists of craneflies, larger Brachycera and hoverflies are given elsewhere (Godfrey in prep.). Mention of some of the more uncommon and interesting species observed amongst the other families studied is given below.

DITOMYIDAE

Ditomyia fasciata (Meigen). Easily recognised because of its banded wings this is a nationally uncommon species associated with beech (*Fagus sylvatica*) woods. This species was found to be frequent in Whippendell Wood, one mile west of Watford, on or about beech logs, in the southern part of the wood TQ 076974. Dates taken include 12.x.1985, 13.x.1985 and 28.iv.1986.

LONCHOPTERIDAE

Lonchoptera scutellata Stein P. One female was taken in a water trap containing a weak formalin and detergent solution placed amongst *Typha latifolia* in the marsh at Cassiobury Park Nature Reserve, ½ mile west of Watford TQ 089975 on 25.iii.1987.

PIPUNCULIDAE

Nephrocerus flavicornis Zett. One male in water trap on 14.vii.1986, in Harrocks, 1½ miles west of Watford TQ 068978. The trap was placed in a clearing by the footpath in secondary woodland dominated by hazel (*Corylus avellana*) coppice. Scrub vegetation in the clearing includes *Euphorbia amygdaloides*, *Prunella vulgaris*, *Epilobium* sp. and *Rubus* sp. (All references to Harrocks Wood below refer to this site.)

OTITIDAE

Physiphora alceae Preyssler. Until recently known as *P. demandata*. Whilst not rare, this species is unfamiliar to many and not often recorded. It is a species that likes sun and is mostly seen in hot weather. One female was taken basking on a beech log, Whippendell Wood, Watford, TQ 076974 on 27.vii.1985.

MEGAMERINIDAE

Megamerina dolium (Fabricius). One female on 17.ix.1985, one male on 13.viii.1986, in water trap in clearing in woodland, Harrocks Wood,

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ford TQ 068978. Chandler (1975) gives an account of the distribution and biology of this local species and mentions the previous Hertfordshire record from Northaw Great Wood in 1966 collected by A.E. Stubbs and C.O. Hammond. It is thought that this species develops in rotting wood but this still has to be proved.

PSILIDAE

Chyliza scutellata Fabricius. A female was taken on 17.vii.1986 in a water trap in Harrocks Wood, TQ 068978. A male and second female were subsequently taken in the same manner on 19.viii.1986.

CLUSIIDAE

Paraclasio tigrina (Fallen). One male of this rare species was taken on the sawn end of a beech log in Whippendell Wood TQ 076974 on 12.x.1985. A second male was taken a few yards away on another beech log on 1.viii.1987. Chandler (1973) gives a useful account of this species. Like other clusiids, this species probably develops in rotting wood.

DROSOPHILIDAE

Leucophenga maculata (Dufour). Usually on or about bracket fungi on beech logs. Records include one male and one female on beech logs in Whippendell Wood TQ 076974 on 28.iv.1986, one female on fungi on silver birch (*Betula pendula*) log in Bricket Wood, Watford TQ 127007 on 3.v.1986, three females on beech logs, Whippendell Wood TQ 076974 on 13.vii.1986 and one female hovering around beech stump, Whippendell Wood TQ 073976 on 1.viii.1987. This species is known to be a fungus feeder and also visits *Ganoderma* brackets with *Drosophila confusa* (Chandler pers. Comm.).

Stegana nigrithorax Strobl. Frequent on beech logs in Whippendell Wood. Dates include one female on 28.ix.1985, three females on 13.vii.1986, and one female on 29.vii.1986, all TQ 076974. This species has been bred from the fungus *Hypoxylon fragiforme* growing on beech bark and it may be worth noting that a *Hypoxylon* species is abundant on the beech logs from where the flies were taken. Determination of this species follows the recent revision by Chandler (1987).

TACHINIDAE

Alophora hemiptera (Fabricius). A distinctive species of 'parasite fly' because of its resemblance to a bug. Taken in a water trap in Harrocks Wood, Watford TQ 068978 on the following dates, one male, 9.vi.1986, one male 22.vi.1986, and one female 15.ix.1986.

Hemyda vittata (Meigen). A rare species confined in Britain to Hertfordshire and Sussex but no doubt overlooked. Originally recorded as new to Britain from nearby Whippendell Wood in 1956 by Barfoot

(1957). Details of other captures may be found in Chandler (1976) and Jones (1978). One male taken in water trap, Harrocks Wood, Watford TQ 068978 on 15.ix.1986.

Subclytia rotundiventris (Fallen). Another rare species originally added as new to the British list by Wainwright (1940) from a specimen taken by J.E. Collin from Farley Down, Hampshire and recorded from only a few localities since (see for example Chandler 1976). One male taken on 15.viii.1985; one male and one female on 27.vi.1986, and one male on 22.vii.1986, all in water trap, Harrocks Wood, Watford TQ 068978.

Servillia ursina (Meigen). One of the early spring species and consequently probably overlooked. Several specimens were taken in an open grassy area in Bishop's Wood, Rickmansworth, TQ 068919 on 2.v.1986.

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